Of all the many factors working for and cleverly exploited by the besieged Nixon, perhaps the most consequential was the national phobia that impeachment and the equivalent by the Senate would be a catastrophe from which the country could not recover and a national disgrace that would blotch out characters forever.

These false concepts dominated the media and the thinking as well as the expression of that thinking by political and other leaders.

Aside from the question of what kind of President Gerald Ford would make, which is not really relevant, the fact is that for all practical purposes the country had lacked a president for two years. Neither the national state of mind nor the economy nor foreign policy not any other important element of national life could have been much worse since the capture of Nixon's men in The Watergate.

That the first Nixon administration was not an equal national economic disaster can easily be attributed to other forces, the two most obvious being the ongoing inertia of a going country that his administration inherited and his continuation of the war in Southeast Asia, which kept factories humming and people working.

He is a negative man and what policies he had were negative, a dedication to the destruction of the constructive efforts of the past.

The worst thing for the nation and its self-respect was his continuation in office with the endless opportunities it provided and he exploited to tear the country farthur apart, to further diminish self-respect, individually and nationally.

= The irratuonality that getting rid of him would be ruinous is probably the major reason he was not just tossed out of the White House and then into jail.